

Message Text

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC
TO ALL AFRICAN DIPLOMATIC POSTS

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR

SUBJECT: DEPARTMENT OF STATE MAY 31 PRESS BRIEFING

FOLLOWING ARE EXCERPTS FROM THE STATE DEPARTMENT MAY 31
PRESS BRIEFING FOR YOUR INFORMATION:

Q: DO YOU HAVE ANYTHING ON THE AMERICANS THAT ARE
LEAVING OR HAVE LEFT ETHIOPIA, AND SPECIFICALLY THE CASE
OF MR. LESLIE FOX?

A: ON LESLIE FOX, FIRST, THE LATEST THAT I HAVE ON HIM
IS THAT OUR CONSUL IN ADDIS ABABA HAS MADE REPEATED
EFFORTS TO SEE HIM. FOX IS NOW IN ADDIS ABABA, AND WE
HAVE BEEN ASSURED, THE CONSUL HAS BEEN ASSURED, BY THE
ETHIOPIAN AUTHORITIES THAT HE WILL HAVE ACCESS TO FOX
TODAY.

NOW, IF THAT HAS HAPPENED, IT HAS ALREADY HAPPENED,
BUT I DON'T HAVE ANY LATE WORD AS TO WHETHER THE ACCESS
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WAS PERMITTED, OR WHAT TRANSPIRED AS A RESULT.

ON THE REDUCTIONS, NO AMERICANS HAVE LEFT YET.
THEY WILL BE LEAVING, AS FAR AS WE KNOW NOW, BY NORMAL
COMMERCIAL FLIGHTS.

I MIGHT NOTE WHAT WE SAID EARLIER, OVER THE WEEK-

END, THAT WE HAD INFORMED THE ETHIOPIAN GOVERNMENT EARLIER OF OUR PLANS TO REDUCE THE AMERICAN PRESENCE IN ETHIOPIA BY THE END OF JULY.

THE NUMBER AFFECTED BY THE ETHIOPIAN REQUEST IS SEVEN IN THE DEFENSE ATTACHE'S OFFICE, AND 30 OTHERS, AND THAT WILL BRING THE LEVEL APPROXIMATELY TO WHAT WE HAD PREVIOUSLY CONTEMPLATED.

Q: WHICH IS WHAT?

Q: THIRTY-SEVEN.

A: A REDUCTION OF ABOUT THIRTY-SEVEN.

Q: I MEAN HOW MANY ARE LEFT THEN?

A: I AM NOT SURE I HAVE THE INFORMATION WITH ME. I WILL TRY TO GET IT FOR YOU.

Q: HAVE YOU ALSO CONTEMPLATED THAT AMONG THE REDUCTIONS THAT YOU PLAN TO MAKE UNILATERALLY WOULD BE THE SEVEN DEFENSE ATTACHES?

A: I SAID IT WOULD BRING THE LEVEL APPROXIMATELY TO WHAT WE HAD PREVIOUSLY CONTEMPLATED. I AM NOT SURE THAT THE SEVEN DEFENSE ATTACHES HAVE BEEN INCLUDED IN THAT.

I MIGHT NOTE ON BACKGROUND, THOUGH, WE HAVE REDUCED UNCLASSIFIED

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OUR MILITARY ASSISTANCE PROGRAM. THAT MIGHT HAVE HAD SOME EFFECT ON OUR PLANS, BUT I CAN'T SAY FOR SURE.

Q: WILL THERE BE A PROPORTIONATE REDUCTION OF ETHIOPIAN PERSONNEL HERE?

A: I DON'T HAVE A THING ON THAT. I AM NOT AWARE THAT IT WILL.

Q: IS THE UNITED STATES PLEASED OR IRRITATED BY THIS DEVELOPMENT.

A: I WILL NOT TRY TO CHARACTERIZE IT FOR YOU.

Q: IS IT GOING TO HAVE ANY EFFECT ON ONGOING U.S. AID PROGRAMS?

A: WELL, I DON'T THINK THAT HAS BEEN DECIDED. THE

PRESENCE OF THE AID PROGRAM AND PERSONNEL THERE HAS NOT YET BEEN DECIDED.

AS FAR AS I KNOW, THE ETHIOPIANS HAVE NOT ASKED US TO REDUCE OUR AID PROGRAM.

Q: WOULD IT BE FAIR TO SAY THAT CUBAN ACTIVITY IN AFRICA HAS NOT HAD ANY SLOWING EFFECT ON THE STEADY MARCH TOWARD RESUMING FORMAL RELATIONS WITH CUBA?

A: WELL, OUR PURPOSE IN EXCHANGING INTEREST SECTIONS WITH THE CUBANS WOULD BE TO IMPROVE CHANNELS FOR DISCUSSING MATTERS OF CONCERN EITHER TO US OR TO THE CUBANS, AND THE FACT THAT WE HAVE DIFFERENCES IS PRECISELY THE POINT OF EXCHANGING, HAVING INTEREST SECTIONS.

Q: WELL THEN, I SUPPOSE THE OPPOSITE COULD BE SAID. THE UNCLASSIFIED

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CUBANS HAVE HASTENED THE EXCHANGE OF DIPLOMATS BY SENDING TECHNICAL ADVISORS INTO ETHIOPIA. IS THAT WHAT YOU ARE SAYING?

A: NO. I AM NOT SAYING THAT.

Q: IS THE ADMINISTRATION ANY FURTHER ENLIGHTENED ABOUT THE PRESENCE OR ACTIVITY OF THE CUBANS IN ETHIOPIA?

A: I DON'T THINK WE HAVE ANY ENLIGHTENMENT BEYOND WHAT WE HAVE ALREADY, I THINK, SAID LAST WEEK ON IT.

Q: THE PRESIDENT SAID OVER THE WEEKEND THAT THERE WERE CUBAN ADVISORS OR WHATEVER IN SOME TEN AFRICAN COUNTRIES AND LAST WEEK IT WAS SAID HERE THERE WERE EIGHT.

WAS THAT A MISTAKE OR WAS IT JUST ANOTHER FIGURE?

A: I DON'T KNOW WHAT THE EXACT NUMBER OF COUNTRIES IS THE PRESIDENT HAD IN MIND. IF YOU LIKE, I CAN LOOK INTO IT FOR YOU.

Q: DO YOU HAVE ANYTHING THERE ON THE RHODESIAN FORCE IN MOZAMBIQUE, WHICH APPARENTLY IS REMAINING IN MOZAMBIQUE?

A: I DON'T KNOW THAT IT IS REMAINING, I DON'T HAVE THAT INFORMATION. IT MAY VERY WELL BE. IN ANY CASE, WE'RE CONCERNED BY THE RHODESIAN RAID ACROSS THE BORDER OF MOZAMBIQUE AND THE NEGATIVE EFFECT IT MIGHT HAVE ON OUR EFFORTS IN COOPERATION WITH THE BRITISH TO SEEK A PEACEFUL

SETTLEMENT TO THE RHODESIAN ISSUE.

THE U.K. CONSULTATIVE GROUP IS NOW NEARING THE END
OF ITS INITIAL ROUND OF TALKS IN SOUTHERN AFRICA WITH THE
NATIONALIST LEADERS AND WITH MEMBERS OF THE SMITH REGIME,
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AND WE, OF COURSE, INTEND TO CONTINUE WORKING CLOSELY
WITH THE BRITISH IN PURSUING A NEGOTIATED SETTLEMENT. WE
HAVE MADE IT CLEAR TO THE RHODESIANS THAT WE DISAPPROVE
OF THEIR CROSS-BORDER MILITARY ACTIONS, WHICH WE FEEL ONLY
SERVE TO COMPLICATE, OR HINDER, THE NEGOTIATING EFFORT.

Q: WHEN WAS THAT MESSAGE CONVEYED?

A: I CAN'T SAY FOR A FACT, BUT I BELIEVE IT PROBABLY WAS
DURING THIS MOST RECENT SET OF DISCUSSIONS IN SALISBURY.

Q: DID YOU HAVE ANYTHING TO SAY TO THE SURROUNDING AFRI-
CAN STATES THAT HAVE BEEN PUTTING PRESSURE ON RHODESIA,
MILITARY PRESSURE? ARE THEY HELPFUL?

A: WE DID NOT, AS FAR AS I KNOW, HAVE ANYTHING TO SAY TO
THEM ON THAT SPECIFIC ISSUE. AS I SAY, THE FIRST ROUND
OF TALKS WILL SHORTLY BE COMING TO AN END, AND I THINK
NOW THAT THERE IS A SHORT PERIOD OF ASSESSMENT BEFORE
FURTHER CONVERSATIONS GO AHEAD. I MIGHT JUST SAY ON
THAT SUBJECT, ALL OF THE PARTIES TO THE DISPUTE HAVE
ACCEPTED THE CONSULTATIVE GROUP, WHICH AS YOU KNOW, IS
A GROUP IN WHICH WE PARTICIPATE, AS A LEGITIMATE AND
RESPONSIBLE BODY WITH WHICH TO NEGOTIATE. AND ALL HAVE
INDICATED WILLINGNESS TO DISCUSS THE COMPLEX CONSTITU-
TIONAL AND OTHER ISSUES RELATING TO THE TRANSITION OF
RHODESIA TO A GOVERNMENT OF MAJORITY RULE.

I CAN'T ANSWER YOUR QUESTION SPECIFICALLY BUT I
WOULD JUST STICK WITH THAT.

Q: DO YOU HAVE ANY ELABORATION ON YOUR USE OF THE WORD

"CONSTITUTIONAL"?

A: I DO NOT.
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Q: IS ANY DRAFTING BEING DONE?

A: I DON'T KNOW.

Q: ARE YOU INTENDING TO BE REPORTING PROGRESS IN THE

CONSULTATIONS, OR SIMPLY ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF THE EXISTENCE
OF THE GROUP.

A: NO I'M NOT NECESSARILY IMPLYING PROGRESS, SIMPLY THAT
THE GROUP WILL SHORTLY COMPLETE ITS TALKS WITH EVERYBODY
THAT'S CONCERNED AND WILL NOW CONTEMPLATE WHAT THEY HAVE
DONE AND THEN GO BACK, PRESUMABLY. I'M NOT IMPLYING
NECESSARILY THAT THERE WAS ANY PROGRESS MADE, NO.
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